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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the impact of ethnocultural diversity on the process of collaboration. Section 1 shares stories of several different experiences with collaborative efforts, highlighting key assumptions about how people work together and how culture impacts assumptions. Section 2 discusses problems and issues related to collaborating. For example, people do not necessarily agree on what it means to collaborate; many collaborative efforts are initiated through formal channels rather than developed naturally; ineffective communication can stop collaborative efforts before they start; collaborative efforts need structure to thrive; and the use of employee evaluation and rewards based on individual merit can undermine collaboration. Section 3 suggests ways that educators and supervisors can help students and trainees develop and use the necessary skills to become better collaborators. The recommendations include: enhancing peoples' awareness in order to facilitate the process of getting to know and understand others; encouraging genuine and heightened efforts that allow people to get to know each other and develop trust and respect; and finding opportunities for people to share time together and rewarding them for their efforts. (Contains 24 references.) (SM)

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Collaboration:

Diverse Voices and Contributions

by

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```Collaboration: Diverse Voices and Contributions

I. Introduction

The word *collaboration* is being used frequently in the educational system of the United States of America (Schwartz 1990). We have found in our research that many people often assume that collaboration is a process whereby individual members of a group share a) a common agenda, b) power and status, c) efforts toward understanding if not consensus, and d) a "give and take" mentality for the success and survival of the group. However, it is possible to find many examples of collaborative efforts that do not have any of these qualities. In reality, collabortion is the interaction that takes place between people who are in a changing relation with each other and are able to communicate with each other through a shared verbal and nonverbal language; therefore, they are potentially able to influence each other (Thayer-Bacon and Brown in review).

Collaboration is the hub of discussion and activity among and between various levels of the education system, such as higher education and its diverse campuses, programs, departments, students and professionals. However, regardless of the level, diverse voices are being shared by teachers, professors, and/or supervisors of students who are currently or will become helping professionals. As these educators, teachers, and supervisors are encouraged to collaborate, many are voicing their appreciation for the collaborative process. At the same time, many are finding that the collaborative process is not without struggle and confusion.

One factor contributing to the struggle and confusion specific to collaboration may be the ethnocultural diversity (i.e., difference in racial and ethnic background)

reflective of the educational system. Educators and supervisors represent a diverse racial and ethnic population. Within our college, for example, the professorial ethnocultural profile includes African American, European American, and Hispanic/Latino. Culture impacts worldview, that is, the way people make sense of the world and interpret reality (Parham 1993, Sue & Sue 1990). Each person creates a unique meaning of her/his world; at the same time these meanings also have universal human qualities (Ivey & Ivey 1993). Clearly, the worldview which each educator or supervisor brings to collaboration impacts the effectiveness of the relationship, process and outcome. As we move into the 21st century, the number of racially and ethnically diverse educators and supervisors will increase. Because the educational system is promoting collaboration as a tool to facilitate maturation and success of students, professionals, and the institution, it seems wise to consider the possible problems and issues that can arise when diverse voices are an integral part of collaboration.

Saying that collaboration is being encouraged in education implies that many in the U. S. A.'s social institution of education have not always valued collaboration. However, in our work to define collaboration we found that it is nothing new (Thayer-Bacon & Brown in review). It has been around as a way of relating with other people since people, as social beings, have walked on this planet. Yet, whether collaboration has been encouraged or applauded as a kind of relating that should be taught to one's young, and developed in one's community, is not necessarily the case and certainly has cultural implications. The Western Eurocentic (male) world view that has encouraged individualism and competition has done so at the expense of cooperating with others. Other cultures, many within the U. S. A. system, such as Native American, African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, and Asian American, have historically

emphasized and encouraged collaboration among their people over individual efforts (Parham 1993, Sue & Sue 1990).

Another factor which adds to the complexity of collaborative relations is gender. Women who embrace a non-European worldview (such as African American women and Latinas) have, within the context of their ethnocultural heritage, historically valued cooperation and sharing to maximize the possibility of being successful for the sake of the group (Arredondo 1993, Sue & Sue 1990, hooks 1984). However, as many non-European women assimilated into the culture and dominant society of the U. S. A. some, who historically valued collaboration as a viable way of life, lost sight of its utility. Today many are reclaiming their heritage and embracing subsequent values such as collective and cooperative behavior (Brown, Lipford-Sanders, & Shaw, 1995; Parham 1993; Pack-Brown, Whittington-Clark, Parker 1998) which are critical components of collaboration. Caucasian women also have a history of being collaborators; they too learned to network and help each other, sharing knowledge and skills as they strived to minimize efforts and maximize the possibility of being successful and fruitful. But Caucasian women, within the context of their Western European heritage, have historically felt that collaboration was a sign of weakness. In contemporary U. S. A., these women are not only beginning to perceive collaboration differently but also perceive collaboration in need of further development and encouragement. Like their racially and ethnically diverse sisters, they too are embracing the value of collaboration (Belenky et al., 1986, Gilligan, 1982, Noddings 1984, 1989).

As the world's resources grow scarcer and diminishing numbers of people are able to meet the demands of life as they have in the past, collaboration is taking on a new meaning. In the past European Americans have been critical of these social perspectives, but now that our resources are growing scarcer, larger numbers of

European Americans are holding collaboration in higher esteem. The purpose of this article is to examine the impact of ethnocultural diversity on the process of collaboration. To accomplish this mission, the article is divided into three parts. In Section I., we will share stories of different experiences we have had with collaborative efforts. With the sharing of stories, key assumptions about how people work together and how culture impacts assumptions will be highlighted. Consequently, some problems or issues related to collaborating will come to our attention and will be addressed in Section II. Finally, if collaboration is a worthy goal, which we believe it is, we will suggest ways educators and supervisors can help students and trainees develop and use the necessary skills to become better collaborators in Section III. It is hoped that this article will help all of us who are attempting collaboration to find our efforts more successfully met.

I. Stories About Collaboration

Prior to sharing specific stories of collaboration, we offer notes of clarification. We use pseudonyms to protect the identity of those with whom we have collaborated. We do not speak for others; our interpretations of our collaborative efforts are ours, not interpretations of those with whom we have collaborated. We contend that human differences like gender, racial and ethnic heritage and subsequent life experiences influence understanding of life's challenges, such as those related to collaboration. Thus, accurate recognition and understanding of reality from gendered, racial and/or ethnic perspectives enhances collaboration.

Joni's Cross-Cultural Collaborative Relationships

Joni (a Caucasian, middle class female) has collaborated on several, distinct projects with a Native American, Grace, and an African American, Binta. She has also co-taught with a bi-lingual teacher, Janis (Spanish and English). All three of these

collaborative relationships have been successful and very rewarding and help point out the impact of ethnocultural diversity on the process of collaboration. It is interesting to note that Joni's cross-cultural collaborative experiences have all been with other women, suggesting that collaboration is more highly valued and practiced by women.

Joni and Janis:

Janis and Joni taught together for one year. They would have chosen to work together longer, but due to school politics such as a newer administrator attempting to change the mission of the school with Janis perceived as a roadblock to that change, Janis was in the process of losing her job and Joni was unaware of this reality. Half way through their year of teaching, the school principal announced to Joni and Janis she would not be renewing Janis's contract. Joni attempted to support Janis against the administrative efforts to remove her. Joni befriended Janis and listened to her concerns. She also spoke up on behalf of Janis and offered evidence to the administration of Janis's high quality teaching. Yet, instead of Joni being able to help Janis, the school principal decided not to renew Joni's teaching contract as well.

During Joni's and Janis's year together, many factors contributed to the effectiveness of their collaboration. For example, Janis had more teaching experience than Joni (at least 15 years to Joni's 4 years), but she did not have the educational background and training Joni brought to the classroom. Joni was hired as the head teacher, and Janis was hired as Joni's assistant. Both agreed on a style of relating with each other and divided up the responsibilities of the classroom, in terms of curriculum and student responsibilities. As Caucasian women who share as part of their ethnic heritage a similar European background, they both valued verbal, open and honest communication in their personal and professional relationships. Of significance was that Joni and Janis were able to easily establish a sense of rapport

and trust built on a strong appreciation for their interpersonal relationships with each other.

Two basic characteristics of collaboration are the interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships of human beings. No matter what the cause or motivating force, when people collaborate and work together, they develop a relationship. However, the ways in which people relate vary according to factors such as gender, ethnicity, race and subsequent values, beliefs, and attitudes. Janis and Joni quickly established that they were more comfortable with what Sue & Sue (1990) label a "collateral-mutual" relationship.

A collateral-mutual human relationship embraces specific goals and the welfare of lateral extended groups such that in times of struggle, friends and family members are consulted. For example, many African Americans value a supportive biological and/or extended family network (Pack-Brown,. Whittington-Clark & Parker 1998, Parham 1993, Sue & Sue 1990). Family is perceived as precious in terms of proximity and emotional support. It follows that African Americans, who embrace a family oriented worldview, will hold in high esteem their network of family and friends when asked to collaborate within an education environment such as schools. African Americans, with this worldview, may also seek the advice and blessings of their network as they experience personal, intellectual, and professional challenges, successes, growth, and development. The possibility increases that African American educators who value their external network of family and friends will include the input of these friends and family in their decision-making process.

Research suggests that many women share similar beliefs, values and attitudes as people of color. This similarity is due, in part, to the female socialization process and oppressive life experiences often associated with being female. For example,

many women are caring and value emotions, as well as support collective and cooperative behavior (Pack-Brown, Whittington-Clark & Parker, 1998; Arrendondo, et. al., 1993; Belenky et al., 1986; Gilligan 1982; Noddings 1984, 1989). Joni and Janis, two Caucasian women, display an appreciation for values similar to those of many African Americans. They value collective behavior and exemplified this value as Joni supported Janis during her issues around not having her teaching contract renewed. Joni was less concerned with her "individualism" and more concerned about her friend (considered a part of her extended family and/or support system) to the degree that both lost their jobs. While the loss of a job may seem a negative reality, particularly in today's world of uncertainty in the workforce, the values, beliefs, attitudes and general worldview exhibited by both women exemplifies a commitment to a specific life approach which influences relationships and collaboration.

Janis and Joni agreed on their collaborative relational approach, and were able to establish a strong rapport with each other through their open, honest communication and overall agreement in common goals. As they collaborated, they recognized differences among themselves and chose to see them as they were, differences, not as deficiencies. They identified and embraced mutual goals and valued the welfare of the other so that each was able to work through their differences, grow from them, and use them to the collective good. For example, Janis was impressed at how organized and punctual Joni was. She appreciated Joni's organization and punctuality, as Joni made sure their room was clean, came to work early and stayed late, and came to work with detailed plans. A benefit for the team was that Joni and Janis were viewed as professionals. Another benefit was that Janis understood more clearly the importance of punctuality, order, and cleanliness in the Western European American educational system. Janis recognized that keeping the

room in order helped her be able to more effectively teach students without interruptions due to not knowing where needed materials were.

Joni learned that Janis's strong communication skills not only promote more accurate verbal and nonverbal communication with parents and students, but also foster a warm and friendly environment for everyone to share their thoughts and feelings while working together. She strives to know her students and incorporates their interests into her lessons. Janis is a talented teacher who loves her subject matter and approaches learning in an enthusiastic and wholistic manner by focusing on the principles of interrelateness and connectedness (Dewey 1965). Joni learned that Janis's patience and flexibility helped establish rapport with their students and parents, and further enhanced students' self-esteem and enthusiasm for learning.

Joni and Grace:

Grace is a Native American (mainly Navaho, according to Grace) who is best described as a gentle and caring person. She espouses some traditional Native American values such as the belief that mind, body, spirit, and nature are one process. She shares freely, is humble, and appreciates cooperation and submission of herself to the welfare of the whole. Her way of thinking about problems is influenced by her Native American values and at the same time, Grace is bi-cultural and is able to function well in traditional European American culture. For example, Grace attended a "top ten" university for her graduate work, a conservative, private university which teaches a tradtional Western European curriculum. Also, her field of study relies on traditional, Western European rational discourse, and favors an analytic approach to solving problems. Grace is able to logically reason in a manner that is acceptable to teachers, journal editors and program review committees. Of significance is that Grace seems most comfortable with her Native American worldview and approach to life.

Joni and Grace met, as graduate students, at the first national conference that Joni attended. Joni did not know very many people and Grace was friendly, willing to introduce Joni to people, and keep her company. Grace had been attending conferences for awhile and had a sense of how to make contacts. Since their first meeting, the two have become friends, been roommates at several subsequent conferences, and presented at panel discussion sessions together. Grace has participated in Joni's research efforts, in terms of being interviewed, and they have written one newsletter article together, with two other people.

Joni discovered a number of Grace's ethnocultural qualities, some of which were familiar to Joni's approach to life and facilitated connectedness. Other ethnocultural qualities were different and unfamiliar to Joni and promoted confusion and influenced the quality of their interpersonal relationship. The way they met reflected Grace's gentle and caring life approach. Grace's bi-cultural way of thinking about problems and issues reflected insight, imagination, and intuition somewhat similar to and at other times different from Joni's. Grace does not tackle topics directly in a linear fashion as most Euro-western (male) thinkers do, she circles around them. Grace is a wonderful storyteller, and she uses her stories to indirectly say what she thinks. She uses metaphors to help make her points. And she takes her time about this, she is a slow talker who does not appreciate being interrupted while she is telling a story.

Joni and Grace have a collaborative relationship that is collateral-mutual in approach. They also share many common values and intellectual interests. That part of their collaboration has been easy. What is difficult has to do with their differences in time orientation, and their different ways of communicating and relating. Grace, like Janis, sees time as relative (i.e., flexible interpretation of time), whereas many European Americans orient with time in a serious, structured fashion. Joni has

learned that Grace is always working on a project beyond deadlines. Grace regularly mails conference submissions by Overnight Express, or calls for an extension. If it is a conference presentation, it is not unusual for Grace to rent a computer at the hotel to finish her paper the night before she is to deliver it. This may involve staying up all night, which is why the two friends no longer room together at conferences! When Grace writes, she goes around the topic, many times and in many ways, before she focuses in and addresses a topic straightforward. This process involves several rewrites for her. The circling is her Native American approach, the straightforward style is the Western European way. Grace is a good listener, and responds to a person's ideas with generosity and sensitivity. She gives wonderful feedback to any writing Joni is working on, but Joni has learned that her 15 page paper may spark 20 pages of responses from Grace. Joni will receive two or three different mailings from Grace, as she will think of more things to say after she sent off her response. These mailings, while very insightful and interesting, will be circular, indirect, and repetitive (from a Western European perspective), and will arrive after the deadline Joni specified so that she would be able to address Grace's feedback in her paper.

Joni and Grace's different communication styles and life approaches create problems. For example, Grace's method of struggling with personal problems has caused Joni to step back and remove herself from professional collaborative efforts, while still attempting to remain her friend. Grace is not open in her communications with Joni (a European American value held in esteem by Joni). Joni feels cautious that Grace has not directly shared her personal life and has some insight that this may be due to Grace's Native American need for privacy and/or discreet caution. Joni is not sure why and interprets Grace's failure to communiate directly as lying, therefore making it difficult for her to continue their professional collaborative relationship. She does not feel confident that they share common goals, are communicating with a

common language or understand each other. Yet, she knows she does not understand why Grace lies about her life situations and realizes that as long as open, honest communication is not certain with Grace, their collaborative efforts must be placed on hold.

Joni and Binta:

Joni and Binta (an African American colleague in the same university department) have collaborated for a number of years. They did not begin their collaborating as soon as they became colleagues. They recognized, early on, their common appreciation for a traditional female value of a relational approach to life and spent time getting to know each other. This is not as easy as it sounds because one of their problems with collaborative efforts, as we have frequently found in our research, was a lack of structural support within the workplace. Often, there is very little time in a day to casually meet with others and develop rapport, find common interests, and discover culturally competent ways we can work together. We will come back to a discussion of this issue in our next section. For now, let us just say that it took Binta and Joni two years of stealing conversations in hallways, as they picked up their mail, at occasional lunches, at infrequently held department meetings, and as invited guest speakers for each others' classes before they initiated a collaborative project together. When they did collaborate, it was with a solid feeling of friendship, a working understanding of and appreciation for their ethnocultural similarities and differences, and a genuine desire to work together.

It has taken Joni and Binta three years to complete their collaborative project, due to time constraints and the need to figure out how their gender adn ethnocultural worldviews influence the collaborative process. They faced usual challenges and demands associated with fulfilling responsibilities in higher education. For example,

both completed the tenure and promotion review processes. While they are in the same department, they are not in the same subject areas, and this means they have professional obligations within their fields of study that must come before their collaborative efforts. This is another problem teachers, counselors, and professors face that we will discuss further in the next section.

While Joni and Binta were able to establish a mutually trusting, respectful, and equitable relationship prior to completion of their collaborative project, they invested time and energy in the process of learning about each other's relational styles, approaches to life, and general worldviews. This process was not without tribulation. For example, Binta's work style follows a traditional African American approach of feeling comfortable in a collateral-mutual relationship. Binta was cautious, exhibiting what some refer to as a "healthy paranoia," when working in the White world. A product of Binta's caution was that she failed to quickly recognize Joni's collateral-mutual work style. Her first impression of Joni was that she was individualistic. That is, Joni offered written opportunities to collaborate and at the same time verbally took the lead in structuring the project. Binta mistrusted the written offer, was cautious in her feedback to Joni, and hesitant to project her voice into the project. She was unsure as to whether Joni would understand her voice, let alone the responses Joni might have to her voice. Joni misunderstood Binta's caution as meaning she was not really very interested in the project, and not wanting to contribute much work. Once Binta and Joni communicated their concerns, expressed and processed their similar and dissimilar ethnocultural and gender life experiences, and learned that both wanted a collateral-mutual approach in their collaborations, their efforts were more successfully met. When Binta understood that Joni wanted and needed feedback and trusted that her voice was to be a clear and visible part of their work, she shared freely. Binta's

direct and open behavior reassured Joni that Binta was indeed interested in their project and had valuable contributions to make.

It is important to recognize some of the cultural and gender realities at play in collaboration around the diverse voices and contributions of Binta and Joni. Some of Binta's caution also comes from feeling highly competent in her oral skills but not as competent in written skills (which is common with African Americans, who tend to be auditory learners and field dependent learners, meaning they rely on their oral skills and the contextuality of experiences to help them process information) (Nieto, 1992; Delpit, 1995). Binta assumed Joni was a better writer, while Joni assumed Binta was a confident writer. In actuality, Joni is also a field dependent learner (as is common with most girls/women regardless of cultural background) but has learned to excel in Western European American analytical styles of thinking/writing due to her major in philosophy, which emphasizes logic and Western European rational thought. Both women are bi-cultural, Binta in terms of African American and Western European(American) cultures, Joni in terms of female and male Western European cultures. Once they communicated and felt comfortable with their strengths and weaknesses, for purposes of their research related to their ethnocultural and gender worldviews, their collaborative efforts made good progress. They learned to rely on each others' strengths and appreciate the power of their differences (e.g., an analytical style of thinking and utilizing a "healthy paranoia" as a tool to guide one's work) and similarities (e.g., relational approach to life) brought to their work and their relationship.

II. Issues and Concerns with Collaboration

We hope that our sharing of experiences in Section I. has helped to bring out some of the issues and concerns that need to be addressed when people attempt to

enter into collaborative relationships with each other. It is our task to discuss these problems further in this section.

One issue in collaborative efforts is people do not necessarily agree on what it means to collaborate, yet we are often guilty of making the assumption that we all agree. We have found in our research that people often assume: "collaboration is something that happens between different forms of institutions ("cooperating agencies" such as public schools and universities); collaboration is concerned with having to share limited resources (money, people, and time) and governance equally; collaboration is used to solve the problems of programs through negotiation; collaborators must have common goals and be equal in status and power" (Thayer-Bacon & Brown in review). These assumptions are specifically aimed at institutions of formal education which hold a Western European American worldview in high esteem. They assume that people are separate, autonomous individuals who come together in partnerships to solve problems, through negotiations that are rational, equal, and fair. They assume that all people do and possibly should think in the same way (linear thinking: for every cause there is an effect). They assume that all people value the same time orientation (present and future) and activity orientation (preference for activities that result in measurable accomplishment by external standards) (Ibrahim 1973). A closer look at these assumptions suggests the need to more carefully identify the contributing factors required for there to be collaboration and to question the requisite assumptions, values, and behaviors necessary to promote successful collaboration. To be successful, it is important that people take the time to get to know each other, and examine their assumptions, values, and ways of relating and communicating before they enter into collaborative projects with others.

Unfortunately, many professional collaborative efforts are initiated in our society through formal channels, e.g. orders and directives from on high (one's boss) are

given: you two will be working together, you are assigned this project and here are your team members. This begins a collaborative effort on shakey ground because the participants directly involved have not necessarily chosen to work together. They are not necessarily on equal ground, in terms of their power and status, and they do not necessarily relate to each other in the same manner. They may not share much of the same contextual background with each other and therefore will have a difficult time relating to and communicating with each other.

We have learned from our experiences (some of which we shared above) that not being able to effectively communicate and relate to each other usually stops collaborative efforts before they even get started. All of our examples involved people we were able to relate to and communicate with each other. We heard, in the case of Joni and Grace, that when their confidence was eroded in their abilities to communicate and trust that they understood each other's diverse voices and contributions, the professional collaborative relationship ceased. With Binta and Joni, when they found they were misunderstanding each other's hidden messages, racial and cultural experiences, they had to address their misunderstandings and discover their false assumptions before they could proceed. It is possible for people to work together on a collaborative project even if such work is not of their choosing (as often happens when bosses order subordinates to work together), and even if the members involved do not share common goals (one may believe the project is valuable and important, the other may be working on the project just to keep her/his job). However, if there is no interaction taking place between the people involved, if there is no communicating and relating to each other where there is the potential ability to influence each other, then we would say there is no collaboration taking place (Thayer-Bacon & Brown in reivew).

Collaborative efforts need structural support to thrive. People need time to get to know each other and discover interests, values, assumptions, and life experiences. People need time to be able to develop bonds and share common experiences so they can more successfully communicate and relate. They need time to learn to trust each other and open up to each other's influences (e.g., gender, racial, and ethnic influences). Schools have found they have plenty of teachers interested in working with each other, as well as other community members or professors from colleges and universities, for example. However, without building release time into teachers' days so they can meet with others and work on projects, teachers are forced to use their own time as a strategy to develop more effective work behaviors. This means squeezing in meetings before work days begin, during lunch, or after a long day's work has already been completed, as Binta and Joni had to do. We found that it took Binta and Joni two years to get to know each other well enough to begin to efectively collaborate with each other, in part because there was no institutional structure to facilitate this process.

Another issue that tends to undermine collaborative efforts is the historical and continued use of institutions evaluating and rewarding employees based on individual merit. A case in point is Joni's and Binta's work toward tenure. While their college and university espoused the importance and value of collaborating across discipline lines (even to the point of offering specific amounts of grant money only to such research efforts), both Joni and Binta were advised to work on their own research projects within their disciplines to insure tenure. Another example is the issue of authorship. Institutions of higher education still give more credit to the first author listed on a published article, even if the authors specify they are co-authors. This is certainly a contradictary message and one that promotes individualism and hierarchy, behaviors that are not valued acress ethnic, racial, and gender lines. In fact, encouraging

collaboration in a framework that supports individual efforts undermines and discredits peoples' joint efforts before they even get started.

Working with other people, as we have shared with you, offers much reward. Our collaborative efforts have resulted in good friendships and personal growth. Collaborations are more involved and complicated than working by oneself. They require effort and are not necessarily more efficient, although they can be, when members divide up their work. Most of us are finding that as resources dwindle in terms of grant support for research projects in the schools, social agencies, and at institutions of higher learning, opportunities for financial support increase as more people are brought in on projects, and the projects are designed to affect more people. Grant support is there for collaborative projects more than in the past, and maybe there is actually more support in general for group projects over individual ones. This is a significant change in North America, away from an Enlightenment Western European (male) approach which has tended to emphasize individual freedom and autonomy.

We believe these changes have the chance to be very valuable and important for a world whose resouces are dwindling, and people are faced with trying to understand and teach to others more knowledge than any one individual can possibly understand. We suggest that this method of working together may be among those vital to uniting the world and promoting peace and harmony (Ruddick 1989). Certainly, we suggest that collaboration is a necessary modality in education as we address realities such as economic distress, intense demands to publish or perish, increased research efforts, building of community, etc. (Martin 1992, Noddings 1992). Collaboration also is likely the method most conducive to the sharing/creating/constructing/furthering of knowledge (Thayer-Bacon 1992, 1993).

III. Recommendations for Educators

Educators in various settings (higher education, secondary and primary education, as well as the mental health professions) are faced with realities (economic problems, relationships problems, etc.) which provide an excellent opportunity to collaborate. Our wish is that the process of collaboration is a productive one for all concerned and that cultural worldviews and values are acknowledged as an intricate component to effective collaborative endeavors. To facilitate this process, the following recommendations are offered:

1) Enhance peoples awareness in order to facilitate the process of getting to know and understand others. Before entering into collaborative projects, offer opportunities to develop the skill of self-reflective behavior around personal and cultural assumptions, values, beliefs, and ways of communicating and relating. Ways to do this should include:

   - Enhancing multicultural education for faculty, administrators, and students.
   - Understanding your worldview and the worldview of those with whom you collaborate.
   - Supplying on-going training to elevate sensitivity and responsiveness to personal identity dimensions such as ethnicity, race, and gender influences on learning styles, communication patterns, respect building.

2) Encourage genuine and heightened efforts for people to get to know each other and develop trust and respect. Ways to do this include:

   - Building relational skills, interpersonal skills, communication skills.

- Having a willingness to work together and a desire to participate.
- Recognizing one's personal approach(es) to difference and seeing difference as positive rather than negative.
- Enhancing personal comfort with difference.

3) Find ways to open up chances for people to share time together and reward them for their efforts. Ways to do this include:

- Create a time in the day, such as a free period, when people can meet.
- Offer a place that is assessible, centrally located, and comfortable for meetings to take place.
- Help people find ways to meet each other and network with each other through open forms of communication such as Email listserves and newsletters. Ensure that these forms of communication reflect diverse voices and contributions.
- Encourage and reward people for their collaborative efforts by acknowledging the value of their work and offering them more ways to continue their efforts.

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